DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 427 387 EA 029 509

AUTHOR Schmidt, Linda J.; Kosmoski, Georgia J.; Pollack, Dennis R.
TITLE Novice Administrators: Personality and Administrative Style Changes.
PUB DATE 1998-00-00
NOTE 13p.; Some tables may not reproduce well.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Administrator Behavior; Administrators; Assistant Principals; *Beginning Principals; Elementary Secondary Education; *Instructional Leadership; *Leadership Styles; Longitudinal Studies; *Psychological Patterns; *School Administration

ABSTRACT

Since the advent of effective-schools research findings, educational administration experts have advocated a democratic and collegial leadership style for school administrators. This paper provides the findings of a study that examined 43 beginning administrators (25 females, 32 Caucasians, 9 African-Americans, 2 Hispanics) to determine what measurable and significant personality and stylistic-preference changes occurred after a 3-year period. Sixteen of the subjects were principals, 14 were assistant principals, and 13 were based at the central office. The study employed a test-retest design, and two instruments were used to examine psychological changes. The findings show that after 3 years on the job, beginning school administrators experienced detrimental personality and leadership-style changes. They became more bureaucratic and less democratic. As a group, they experienced personality shifts and became more controlling, exacting, driven, and overwrought. Women and African-Americans exhibited the most changes. The findings were supported by the results of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. Neophytes demonstrated a style change from feeling- or people-oriented to more thinking- or fact-oriented. They all became more judgmental and less perceptive. Since effective-schools research has proven that administrators with a more democratic style are more effective, the shift in style was detrimental to beginning administrators. (RJM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
L. Schmidt
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

ED 427 387

Novice Administrators: Personality and Administrative Style Changes

Linda J. Schmidt, Georgia J. Kosmoski and Dennis R. Pollack

Abstract. After three years on the job, beginning school administrators experienced detrimental personality and leadership style changes. They were transformed from Jekylls to Hydes. In leadership style, they became more bureaucratic and less democratic; thereby, reducing their opportunity to succeed. As a group, they experienced personality shifts and became more controlled, exacting, driven, and overwrought. Women and African Americans were most effected. Since these traits are directly linked to stress-related illnesses, beginning school administrators, both building-based and at the central office, put themselves at physiological risk. Some suggested activities that might successfully stem this transformation included: On going programs that emphasize democratic leadership beliefs and practices, training sessions for stress reduction, proactive assistance with health, exercise, and dietary planning.

Since the advent of the effective schools research findings of the late 1970s and early 1980s, educational administration experts have advocated a democratic and collegial leadership style for school administrators. Kosmoski (1997) and other specialists pointed out that a democratic style is more effective and successful than an autocratic, bureaucratic, or directive style (Acheson & Gall, 1992; Glasser, 1969; Kaiser, 1993; Kowalski & Reitzug, 1993; Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1988). For more than fifteen years, university preparation programs for aspiring school administrators have emphasized that successful instructional leaders, school administrators, should develop and use a democratic or indirect style when working with their constituents.

Current literature in the field of educational administration suggests that many, if not most, of our working school administrators are bureaucratic and task-oriented, rather than people-oriented.

EA 029 509

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

2

(Clinchy, 1995; Goodlad, 1984; Sacken, 1994). How is this possible? Are universities ineffective in their training or do aspiring school administrators change once they assume new administrative positions?

Along with this conundrum, is the fact that educational administration experts acknowledge the stressful nature of the job of school administration. They posit that today's beginning administrators are faced with constant stressful situations (Tanner & Tanner, 1987)

With these facts in mind, several questions might be raised. Do beginning school administrators change their leadership style over time? Are they affected by the position itself and experience changes in personality related to stress? Are aspiring democratic, collegial, and people centered Jekylls (beginning administrators) poisoned by assuming an administrative position and turned into Hydes?

Practical wisdom suggests that these questions should be answered affirmatively. However, knowledge based upon measurable statistical information was necessary to draw any meaningful conclusions regarding the possible changes in style and personality of novice school administrators. Therefore, a study was conducted to examines 43 beginning administrators to determine what measurable and significant personality and stylistic preference changes occurred after a three year period a new administrative position.

METHOD

Subjects. This was a three year study of 43 beginning school administrators. Beginning school administrators were defined as those individuals who were beginning a new position as a school administrator, i.e. a first year novice at a given position. Thirty beginning school administrators

were building-based and 13 central office based. Sixteen subjects assumed the position of principal, 14 became assistant principals, and 13 began jobs at the central office. No superintendent of schools participated in this study. Twenty-five subjects were female. Thirty-two subjects were Caucasian, 9 African American, and 2 Hispanic. Twenty-three participated in a year-long mentoring program (Group 1) while 20 did not participate (Group 2).

This study was conducted in a large Midwestern megalopolis. Twelve subjects assumed administrative positions in the city; 28 novices were employed in the surrounding suburbs; and 3 began work in rural districts within forty miles of the city. The districts that employed these school administrators represented all socio-economic levels with greatest representation at the middle and lower middle class level.

Procedure. This study employed a test/retest design. Two instruments were used to examine psychological changes. *The 16 Personality Factor Inventory* (16 PF), *Form A* was administered to all neophytes to determine personality tendencies and patterns. The *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* (MB) was administered to all subjects in order to examine changes in leadership style. The Myers-Briggs identified preferences or tendencies in leadership style. All beginning administrators completed both the 16PF and the MB within two months of commencing their new position (Time 1), and again, after three years in the position (Time 2). Pre/post responses were compared to determine if there were significant changes in personality and leadership style after three years in the new administrative position. The variables of gender, ethnicity, and type of position (building-based or central office) were examined to determine if they affected personality and leadership style.

Hypotheses. Three hypotheses were tested.

- There would be significant changes in mean scores on the individual Factors of the 16 Personality Factor Inventory.
- There would be significant changes in mean scores on the individual Profiles of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicators.
- The variables of gender, ethnicity, and type of position would affect significant changes of mean scores on the 16PF and the MB.

ANALYSES OF DATA

A test/retest experimental design was used. Data were analyzed using the statistical software package, *Statistical Package of Social Studies 6.1 for Windows* (SPSS). A variety of statistical treatments were employed. A comparison of means, single anovas, multiple analysis of variance were utilized to identify significant patterns and differences for individual beginning administrators and between groups. Experience of individuals was measured by change from pre to post-test of the various assessment tools. A 2x2 analysis of variance was employed to compare experience with gender, ethnicity, and type of position. This procedure was selected after consulting Kerlinger (1986), Smith (1985), and Vockell and Asher(1995).

RESULTS

Psychological change and the effects on personality and leadership style, as measured by the 16PF and MB, were examined. Significant 16 PF main effects were found for Factor F (sober/ serious vs. happy go lucky), Factor G (expedient vs. conscientious / moralistic), Factor L (trusting vs. suspicious / hard to fool), Factor M (practical vs. imaginative / absent minded), Factor Q3

(undisciplined / lax vs. controlled / exacting), and Factor Q4 (relaxed / tranquil vs. tense/ driven/ overwrought). After three years, beginning administrators became more serious and sober. They became more expedient and practical. All became more suspicious and hard to fool. They were more controlled and exacting. All became more tense, driven, and overwrought.

There was a main effect for ethnicity and Factor N (forthright / unpretentious / socially clumsy vs. astute / socially polished). Results were bifurcated. African Americans became significantly more forthright, unpretentious, and socially clumsy; whereas, other ethnicites became more astute and socially polished. Results demonstrated a significant main effect and a significant interaction for ethnicity and Factor Q4. All ethnicities became more tense, driven, and overwrought. African Americans were initially more tense, driven, and overwrought but showed less of a change than their counterparts with an average mean change of .96 and 1.55, respectively. Although African Americans were initially more tense, driven, and overwrought than their counterparts, after three years (Time 2), beginning administrators, regardless of ethnicity, had virtually equal mean scores. (For Time 2, African Americans' mean score was 5.73. Others' mean score was 5.86. The difference between means was .13).

A similar pattern to ethnicity and Factor Q4 was demonstrated for gender and Factor Q4. A significant main effect was demonstrated. Both men and women became more tense, driven, and overwrought. Women were initially more tense, driven, and overwrought but showed less of a change than their male counterparts with an average mean change of .96 and 1.57, respectively. Although females were initially more tense, driven, and overwrought than their counterparts, after three years (Time

2, the mean score for women was 5.73. Mens' mean score was 5.86. The difference was .13)

There were main effects for position and experience for Factors G, L, M, Q3, and Q4. Beginning school administrators, building based or working at the central office, became more expedient, suspicious, and practical. They became more controlled and exacting. All became more tense, driven, and overwrought. See Table 1 and 2.

TABLE 1
COMPARISON OF MEANS FOR SIGNIFICANT 16PF FACTORS

Variable	Mean 1	Mean 2
Main Effect for Factor F		
Group 1	5.70	4.80
Group 2	5.95	5.35
Main Effect for Factor G		
Group 1	6.25	5.25
Group 2	6.05	5.50
Main Effect for Factor L		
Group 1	4.35	5.10
Group 2	3.90	4.85
Main Effect for Factor M		
Group 1	5.10	4.40
Group 2	5.55	5.30
Main Effect for Factor Q3		
Group 1	5.80	6.80
Group 2	5.70	5.85
Main Effect for Factor Q4		
Group 1	4.65	5.50
Group 2	4.55	6.05
Factor N x Ethnicity		
Other	4.03	4.56
African American	6.63	5.75
Factor Q4 x Ethnicity		
Other	4.29	5.86
African American	4.77	5.73
Factor Q4 x Gender		
Male	4.29	5.86
Female	4.77	5.73
Factor G x Position		
Building Based	6.19	5.46
Central Office	6.07	5.21

Factor L x Position Building Based Central Office	4.19 4.00	4.85 5.21
Factor N x Position Building Based Central Office	5.23 5.50	4.77 5.00
Factor Q3 x Position Building Based Central Office	5.04 5.21	6.50 6.00
Factor Q4 x Position Building Based Central Office	4.35 5.07	5.58 6.14

TABLE 2
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR SIGNIFICANT 16PF VARIABLES

Source of Variation	SS	DF	MS	F	Sig of F
Within+Residual 16PF Factor F Position	31.75 11.25	39 1	.81 11.25	13.82	.001
Within+Residual 16PF Factor G	50.49 12.01	39 1	1.29 12.01	9.28	.004
Within+Residual 16PF Factor I Position	53.55 14.45	39 1	1.37 14.45	10.52	.002
Within+Residual 16PF Factor N Position	26.99 4.51	39 1	.69 4.51	6.52	.050
Within+Residual 16PF Factor Q3 Position	30.89 6.61	39 1	.79 6.61	8.35	.006
Within+Residual 16PF Factor Q4 Position	57.89 27.61	39 1	1.48 27.61	18.60	.000
Within+Residual PEN Ethnicity x PEN	48.42 .38 6.33	38 1 1	1.27 .38 6.33	.30 4.97	.589 .032
Within+Residual PEQ4 Ethnicity x PEQ4	41.23 44.25 16.65	38 1 1	1.09 44.25 16.65	40.78 15.35	.000 .000
Within+Residual PEQ4 Gender x PEQ4	56.20 29.19 1.69	38 1 1	1.48 29.19 1.69	19.74 1.14	.000 .291
Within+Residual PEG Position x PEG	50.41 11.47 .07	38 1 1	1.33 11.47 .07	8.65 .05	.006 .815

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Within - Residual	52.12	38	1.37		
PFL	15.88	1	15.88	11.58	.002
Position x PFL	1.43	1	1.43	1.04	.314
Within - Residual	26.98	38	.71		
PFM	4.21	1	4.21	5.92	.02
Position x PFM	.01	1	.01	.01	.923
Within - Residual	30.41	38	.80		
PFQ3	7.08	1	7.08	8.84	.005
Position x PFQ3	.48	1	.48	.60	.444
Within - Residual	57.77	38	1.52		
PFQ4	24.12	1	24.12	15.86	.000
Position x PFQ4	.12	1	.12	.08	.784

An examination of the MB showed a main effect for the MB Indicator for Thinking vs. Feeling. Over the three years, the leadership style of all beginning administrators became more Thinking and less Feeling. There was a main effect for ethnicity on this same MB Indicator. African Americans became more Thinking than other ethnic group. A main effect was demonstrated for the MB Indicator for Perceiving vs. Judging. Novice administrators became more Judgmental and less Perceptive during the first three years. Refer to Tables 3 and 4.

TABLE 3
COMPARISON OF MEANS FOR SIGNIFICANT MYERS BRIGGS INDICATORS

Variable	Mean 1	Mean 2
Thinking vs. Feeling Indicator		
Group 1	5.55	5.45
Group 2	5.55	5.20
T F Indicator x Ethnicity		
Others	5.59	5.41
African Americans	5.25	5.00
Perceiving vs. Judging Indicator		
Group 1	7.75	7.70
Group 2	8.00	8.00

TABLE 4
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR SIGNIFICANT MYERS BRIGGS VARIABLES

9

Source of Variation	SS	DF	MS	F	Sig of F
Within+Residual	4.00	38	.11		
MB Thinking Feeling	.80	1	.80	7.60	.009
Group x MB T/F	.20	1	.20	1.90	.176
Within+Residual	4.19	38	.11		
MB Thinking Feeling	.61	1	.61	5.56	.024
Ethnic. x MB T/F	.01	1	.01	.11	.738
Within + Residual	5.47	38	.14		
Group x MB P/F	1.51	1	1.51	10.50	.002

DISCUSSION

This study demonstrated that beginning administrators experienced significant personality and leadership changes during the first three years in a new position. Results from the 16PF revealed that personality changes for all beginning administrators shifted from a more democratic to a more bureaucratic or directive style with experience. They became more task and less people oriented. They became more expedient, suspicious, and practical (Blumberg &Amidon, 1965; Lewin, Lippitt, & White, 1939).

These finding were also supported by the results on the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. Neophytes demonstrated a style change from feeling or people oriented to more thinking or fact oriented. They all became more judgmental and less perceptive. The term "judgmental" is commonly used as a descriptor for individuals who use a bureaucratic style.

Since effective school research proved that administrators with a more indirect or democratic/collegial style are more effective and successful, this shift in style was detrimental to beginning administrators. Education must preserve effective democratic Jekylls, and not allow them to be transformed into ineffective bureaucratic Hydes. Revitalizing, supporting, and renewing, on-the-

job programs which emphasize the need to maintain a democratic attitude and style would benefit these novice administrators.

Other noteworthy personality changes measured on the 16 PF which occurred to all beginning school administrators (with African Americans and females most affected) included becoming more controlled, exacting, tense, driven, and overwrought. This held true for both genders, regardless of the position. These traits are directly linked by psychologists and health professionals to stress-related illnesses (Kahn, 1973; Marcson, 1970; Sheppard; 1971). They make beginning school administrators highly vulnerable to cardiac disease and perhaps premature death.

Five suggested actions which might halt or lessen the change from Jekyll to Hyde for beginning administrators are:

- Universities, state certification programs, and professional organizations should establish intensified and ongoing programs which emphasize democratic leadership beliefs and practices. These sessions should be made available to the working school administrator.
- These same groups and agencies should provide information and training sessions on stress- reduction techniques and practices for beginning school administrators.
- Educators and Health Professionals, working together, need to address the problem of increased stress and provide health, exercise, and dietary planning assistance for all novices.
- The special needs of women and African American beginning school administrators must be recognized and addressed.

- Educators, in particular staff development specialists, must recognize that central office novices have the same vulnerability and personal and professional needs as administrators located in the schools. All suggested programs listed above should be made available to this often forgotten or ignored group.

Although this study has limitations of size, location, and duration, it does suggest a number of major educational implications and does merit serious consideration. It is strongly suggested and highly recommended that this research study be repeated with a larger and more geographically diverse pool of beginning school administrators to verify or refute these findings. If, as this study indicated, our beginning administrators are transformed over time from Jekyll to Hyde; then we need to face this problem head on, implement corrective measures, and stop this transformation in its tracks.

REFERENCES

Acheson, K. A., & Gall, M. D. (1992). *Techniques in clinical supervision of teachers* (3rd ed.). New York: Longman.

Blumberg, A., & Amidon, E. (1965). Teacher perceptions of supervisor-teacher interaction. *Administrators Notebook*, 14, 1-8.

Clinchy, E. (1995). Learning about the real world: Recontextualizing public schools. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 75(5), 400-404.

Goodlad, J. I. (1984). *A place called school: Prospects for the future*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Kahn, R. (1973). Conflict, ambiguity, and overload: three elements in job stress. *Occupational Mental Health, 3*, 87-94.

Kaiser, J. (1993). *Educational administration* (2nd ed.). Mequone, WI: Stylex Publishing Co., Inc.

Kerlinger, F. N. (1986). *Foundations of behavioral research* (3rd ed.). New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.